

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING A STUDY OF REGULATING DENTISTS WHOSE PRACTICES INCLUDE TREATMENT OF PATIENTS WITH TEMPOROMANDIBULAR JOINT SYNDROME.

WHEREAS, temporomandibular joint syndrome affects an estimated ten million people in the United States, most between twenty and forty years old; and

WHEREAS, temporomandibular joint syndrome affects the use of the jaw and the mouth, and can cause jaw pain, head, neck or earaches, spasms and dizziness; and

WHEREAS, temporomandibular joint syndrome can be caused by misalignment, stress or structural abnormalities; and

WHEREAS, treatment for temporomandibular joint syndrome ranges from use of warm compresses to prescription of muscle relaxants to invasive surgery to replace the joint; and

WHEREAS, the New Mexico board of dental health care does not currently require special credentials for a dentist who performs invasive surgery to correct temporomandibular joint syndrome; and

WHEREAS, a patient who suffers from temporomandibular joint syndrome has little, if any, professional guidance in seeking a dentist competent in diagnosing, treating and correcting the disorder; and

WHEREAS, issuance of credentials to and defining the

scope of practice for a specialization and regulation of dentists who treat temporomandibular joint syndrome would protect patient safety, promote sound consumer choices of dentists involved in treatment of that syndrome and more carefully regulate dentists that perform surgery for that syndrome;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico board of dental health care be requested to adopt and promulgate rules to regulate the practice of dentists who diagnose, treat and correct temporomandibular joint syndrome; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to members of the New Mexico board of dental health care and to the secretary of health.